

## REPORT ON NATIVE PAPERS

FOR

The Week ending the 21st April 1877.

THE *Bhārat Sangskārak*, of the 9th April, writes a lengthy editorial, headed "To whom should we be grateful for the present prosperity of India?" We give the substance below:—"Signs of prosperity have been visible on every side ever since the English became rulers of India; and it seems to us, on reflection, as though they had come to the country to relieve her of her burden of woe. Ignorant superstitions are gradually vanishing before the steady light of scientific knowledge. The national literature is being enriched, while the national life, which was well nigh extinct, shows signs of revival. Enthusiasm and hopeful enterprise are now to be seen, where formerly there was effortless despair. Commerce and the manufactures too have flourished. In short, within the space of one hundred years the face of India has worn quite a new aspect. The electric telegraph, railways and canals, steam-ships, roads, bridges, and steam-engines for various works have brought about a gigantic change in its material condition. Nor has progress been less marked in the mental activity and religious tendencies of the people. Education is fast spreading, and political agitations are common. The country enjoys profound peace, and the blessings of justice and good Government.

BHARAT  
SANGSKARAK,  
April 9th, 1877.

"Now, to whom should we be grateful for the possession of these advantages? Two answers might be, and are, given to this question by two different classes of people. According to one class, all are due to a Providence whose ways are inscrutable; though, under it, the English Government has some claim on our gratitude. It is maintained that a grateful recognition of favors is only spontaneous, when good is done from disinterested motives. No one is grateful to a merchant, though he furnishes the country with articles needful for support and comfort; and the benefits England has conferred on India are of this description. A self-interested policy has always characterized her actions, and has led to the introduction of good government, and the benefits that follow in its train. The other class is altogether grateful to the English for the present prosperity. The editor does not agree with either, and observes that "the merit of a good act is nullified, when it is done from any motives of self-interest; and where the motives are low there is no scope for gratitude. Some degree of mistrust, indeed, in connection with these grounds of action may be even necessary. For a passive acquiescence in all public measures will crush out all political life and vigour; and to this may probably be attributed the utter helplessness of natives in respect of public measures. An all-engrossing loyalty has extinguished this our high sense of political activity. The English themselves know whether they are entitled to our gratitude. It may be that on some occasions they feel uncomfortable, when praises are bestowed on them, as unsuitable." History will, however, do them justice.



HINDU RANJIKÁ,  
April 11th, 1877.

2. The *Hindu Ranjika*, of the 11th April, remarks that it is the duty of Government always to keep a watchful eye on the mode in which justice is administered in the mofussil; to enquire if the people truly enjoy the advantages derivable from these measures, and if the object of law is attained. It is the want of such constant supervision that will account for the unsatisfactory state of the courts in the interior. The truth of this remark may be illustrated in the case of the Subordinate Judge's Court of Rajshahye, with the working of which the local public is extremely dissatisfied. While on this subject, it should be remarked that an occasional inspection of the courts in the mofussil by the Judges of the High Court may considerably help to bring about various improvements.

HINDU RANJIKÁ.

3. The same paper writes, in an article headed "the Viceregal office":—"To meet an increased expenditure, Government must have recourse to one of two measures—it must increase its revenues, or reduce its present expenses. Instead of devising measures to secure a larger income, which it cannot do without oppressing its subjects, it is more prudent, as well as feasible, to adopt the latter plan. Government, however, does not perceive this; and, as a consequence, Bengal has been asked to raise a sum of Rs. 27,50,000 in this year by means of additional taxation. The uneasiness thus occasioned may be easily imagined. The inconveniences and distress attending the income-tax are not yet forgotten; and the road cess, which is in force, is paid by many with extreme difficulty. Why, then, is not a reduction made of all unnecessary expenditure, instead of harassing the people by the imposition of fresh taxes?" As a measure which might result in a considerable saving, the editor suggests the abolition of the Viceregal office, which can scarcely be considered necessary at the present time. A Governor-General for India was, indeed, needed in days when it took months to convey intelligence to the Home authorities, or receive communications from them. It now takes as many hours, and the post of a Governor-General has practically become a sinecure. It is not impracticable for the authorities in England to administer the government by communications made direct to the provincial Governors; and since the Viceroy carries on his duties for half the year in his retreat in the Simla Hills, the Secretary of State may as well govern the country from England. By the proposed measure the Exchequer will gain considerably. The Board of Revenue also, which is a costly establishment, may be abolished with profit.

BISHWA SUHRID,  
April 11th, 1877.  
Circulation about 450.

4. The *Bishwa Suhrid*, of the 11th April, writes as follows in reference to Act VII (B.C.) of 1876:—"We should like to ask for what noble object this Act was passed. A careful consideration of its provisions has not enabled us to detect any appreciable advantage derivable from it. If there be any, it is more than counterbalanced by the disadvantages which must attend its operation. The apparent object is to prevent disputes between co-sharers respecting their rights. But, in practice, this end will never be attained; on the contrary, most injurious consequences are likely to follow. The compulsory registration of land will afford large opportunities to the selfish and unprincipled to take advantage of other men's ignorance and deprive them of their rights. How many poor and helpless widows and others will be ruined! Litigation will increase, and this poor country be still more deeply impoverished. It behoves Government, in view of these consequences, to repeal the Act; or, if that be not practicable, at least to introduce into all districts the provisions of section 43, which exempts small landholders from the restrictions laid down."



5. We take the following from the opening editorial in the *Bhārat Mihir*, of the 12th April, headed the "Judicial and Executive Services:—"  
"It is an act which reflects great glory on the British Government that, after this land had groaned for centuries under a rule of brute force, they have introduced the reign of law. During the period of Mahomedan ascendancy, or rather towards the decline of that power, the laws fell into disuse and might was right; no law was found adequate to check the strong hand of the oppressor. That state of things has, however, almost disappeared under the British rule—almost, for even now the temerity of certain officers, who are exceedingly fond of power, has not entirely subverted the rule of brute force. Now, those who are for enhancing the power of the Executive at the expense of the Judicial service, and the authority of law, do not only disregard law, but, in our opinion, are enemies of the British Government. We had hoped that, with the prevalence of peaceful laws, the powers of Magistrates might be gradually reduced. But a class of advisers have now made their appearance in the Legislative Councils, and the cherished object of the superior ranks of the public service seems to be to advance the magisterial powers, to the depreciation of law and the judicial courts. In the debate on those sections of the Civil Procedure Code Bill, which had reference to the abolition, as regards Moonsifs and Subordinate Judges, of jurisdiction in cases against Government, Sir John Strachey distinctly confessed himself of this opinion. The commencement of such a measure may be traced to the days of Sir George Campbell; and the malignant influence which led to the enactment of Act X of 1872 has ever since that time obtained an increasing number of advocates. We had known long before that the Magistrates, and those that advocate their interests, were in favour of arbitrary authority; but it had never occurred to us that such a principle could be openly enunciated in the Legislative Council. It seems to be a fact lost sight of, that the rapid progress, which the country has made under the British Government, has been entirely due to its impartial laws, in whose eye all are equal; and though we are aware that an obnoxious section still disfigures the Criminal Procedure Code, and that, owing to a love of race, in practice law is often set aside, still we cannot but admit the comparative superiority of the laws of the British Government. It is no wonder that the Magistrates, who possess almost despotic power, should occasionally abuse their authority. The illegal acts of many of them have, however, made the Executive exceedingly unpopular; and the people now always regard their acts with suspicion. An impression seems to prevail that, with a powerful clique of the superior authorities, it is an avowed object to introduce the reign of force into this country."

6. After explaining the circumstances which led to Mr. Eden's fixing on the Road and Irrigation Cesses as the most feasible means of raising the additional revenue required for Bengal, the same paper observes:—"No blame can attach to His Honor, for we understand the difficulty in which he is placed. He must bear the burden imposed on him by the Government of India; and has himself regretted it as an unfortunate circumstance that he should be under the necessity of inaugurating his administration with a new tax. It is not wise to have recourse to an income-tax for this purpose; nor is it likely that the imposition of any other new tax will be free from difficulties. Hence an irrigation cess and an increased road cess."

"The Government of Bengal cannot do without imposing a new tax in its present circumstances. It is, however, to be remarked—first, that though the collection of the road cess has not raised such strong opposition



as was done in the case of the income-tax, still it has been productive of oppression and inconvenience to the people. Not a few heartless and exacting landlords make the collection of the cess a pretext for sucking dry the life-blood of the ignorant ryot. In some places, too, the Government revenue is not accepted, unless the cess be first paid. Then, again, the road cess funds are sometimes expended on works which should in justice be paid for by the Public Works Department. It should be observed, in the second place, that the peasantry and the labourers in Bengal are not, after all, such a well-to-do class of people as Mr. Eden takes them to be. Thirdly, it is not just to throw the burden only on those classes that have to do with the land, for they are already taxed, and, moreover, they are likely to derive but little good from the irrigation works. The chief gainers will be the money-lenders and the merchants; yet they are free from taxation. On these classes a license-tax should have been this year imposed, as in the North-Western Provinces. Another thing to be said in this connection is that, while it is regarded as unjust that Bombay or any other province of India should be made to pay for any improvements in Bengal, Mr. Eden, in this matter of irrigation cess, proposes to tax the whole population of this province for the benefit of a few in Orissa, on the ground that they are inhabitants of one common presidency. As a matter of fact, however, one part of Bengal is so essentially different from another, that it would not be wrong to regard them as entirely different countries. In conclusion, the scheme of the decentralization of finance, while, on the one hand, it has the advantage of making the local Governments more careful as to their expenditure and public works, possesses, on the other, the disadvantage that it may induce a remissness on the part of the Supreme Government in attending to the financial administration of the Governments subordinate to it."

BHARAT MINIR,  
April 12th, 1877.  
Circulation about 650.

7. Adverting to Sir John Strachey's observations respecting the extraordinary public works, the same paper remarks thus:—Government cannot, in justice to the people, stop the prosecution of such works; but it is their duty to check all unnecessary expenditure; and in the present depressed condition of the Indian Exchequer, the execution of any unremunerative public works should not be undertaken by the Government; but efforts should be made to induce Native and European capitalists to take up the matter.

BHARAT MINIR.

8. The same paper remarks that the disputes between landlords and tenants, which have of late become very common in Bengal, are in a great measure due to the entire ignorance on the part of the landholders of the condition of their estates. There is little of fellow-feeling between them and their tenants, who are entirely subjected to the authority of unprincipled amlah. The example of Magistrates, who make tours through the districts under their charge, and who are always desirous of learning the ways and habits of the people, is commended to the attention of the Bengal zemindars.

AMRITA BAZAR  
PATRIKA,  
April 12th, 1877.  
Circulation about 2,217.

9. In an editorial headed, "Why should we pay an additional tax?" the *Amrita Bazar Patrika*, of the 12th April, makes very nearly the same observations as those noticed in paragraph 25 of our last report.

AMRITA BAZAR  
PATRIKA.

10. In another article on the same subject, the same paper, while realizing the difficulty of the position in which His Honor has been placed, by being called on to raise an additional revenue by fresh taxation, enters its protest against the enhancement of the road cess rates, on the ground that this would interfere with the terms of the permanent settlement. The imposition of an income-tax, which affects the wealthy, is the best means of meeting the demands of the Exchequer. Calcutta, which is an imperial



city, should be made to pay it. If, however, owing to the opposition that is likely to be raised against it, Government would not find this measure feasible, the salt duties may be raised with advantage. A license-tax also is not open to any special objection, except it be that the proceeds from this source will be small.

11. Adverting to the same subject, the *Moorshedabad Patriká*, of the 13th April, remarks:—"Considering that Mr. Eden possesses a thorough acquaintance with the internal condition of the country, we cannot tell what led him to have recourse to these schemes of taxation, which will lay the axe at the root of the permanent settlement and ruin our landholders. Instead of the happiness we had expected to enjoy under His Honor's administration, it now becomes a matter of doubt whether Bengal will be able to retain even her former position."

MOORSHEDABAD  
PATRIKA,  
April 13th 1877.

12. The *Hindu Hitoishini*, of the 14th April, notices with regret that the Government, which in its generous sympathies has enacted a special law for the prevention of cruelty to animals, does not attend to the miserable condition of the amlah attached to Small Cause Courts. Their work has of late years vastly increased, but there has been no increase either in their pay or number. They are overworked and ill-paid.

HINDU HITOISHINI,  
April 14th, 1877.  
Circulation about 300.

13. The same paper agrees with the *Amrita Bazar Patriká*, of the 12th instant, in one opinion, that an enhancement of the salt duties would be preferable to the proposed road and irrigation cesses, which will press heavily on the poor tenantry, and in many cases the poorer landlords. The imposition will also be another instance of the interference of the State with the permanent settlement of land in Bengal.

HINDU HITOISHINI.

14. A correspondent of the *Howrah Hitakarí*, of the 15th April, directs the attention of Government to the wretched condition of the road, which branches off at Sharshya from the main road leading from Chodgah to Jessore. The former is the only means of communication between several villages; and its submergence under water in the rainy season occasions extreme inconvenience to a large number of people. As the road cess is levied in these places, it behoves the authorities to keep this line of communication in good order.

HOWRAH HITAKARI,  
April 15th, 1877.  
Circulation about 516.

15. The *Sádháraní*, of the 15th April, observes the following in an article headed the "New tax":—"It is clear that henceforth the people will have to pay double the present road cess, and it is their duty to protest against it. It is neither wrong nor objectionable to levy a tax on the wealthy, and apply the proceeds towards the excavation of canals and the prosecution of other works of public utility; but the way in which the road cess is levied, and the funds expended, is open to serious objections.

SADHARANI,  
April 15th, 1877.  
Circulation about 516.

"The road cess, on the face of it, does not appear a bad thing: one pice in the rupee is not much; but though not in the large majority of instances, in many at least, the ryot is, as a matter of fact, made to pay the whole of the amount; and we fear the same consequences will follow the imposition of the present tax. The road cess has been in existence for the last few years, but nowhere do we find the people pleased with it, and we have particular experience of the districts of the 24-Pergunnahs, Hooghly, Jessore, Moorshedabad, Nuddea, and Burdwan. In some places the pay of the engineers, who are Europeans, and their subordinates, absorbs the whole of the funds thus raised, while in others the favorite *thikadars* pocket it all. Add to this that the Road Cess Committee is a *self-governing institution*,



which gives heed to no protestations; hence it is our belief that another cess of the same character will not be beneficial."

SOMA PRAKASH,  
April 16th, 1877.  
Circulation about 700.

16. The *Soma Prakásh*, of the 16th April, writes the following in an article headed "Government takes illegal cesses":—There is a story to this effect: an old man had a son who was very intemperate. This greatly displeased the father, who constantly reproved him and personally exhorted him, and sought the aid of his relatives to bring about a reformation. At length the son consented to give up the pernicious habit, on condition that his father should for once taste liquor; thereupon the old man thought, as this was his only son, a concession on his part might lead to his salvation, and for his own sin he might thereafter offer a sacrifice, and he yielded, and found such relish in liquor that he could never afterwards give it up. On being remonstrated with, he replied that, though his son might relinquish the practice, he could not. And so it is with our Government, which labored to put an end to the practice of levying illegal cesses on the part of the zemindars, but having now itself tasted the sweets of such exactions, is not prepared to give them up; but, on the contrary, is prompt to increase its income by them. The road cess is one of these."

SOMA PRAKASH.

17. In another article, the same paper sets forth at length its objections to the practice on the part of the Supreme Government of annual sojournings in the Simla Hills, which costs so much to the country.

URDU GUIDE,  
April 12th, 1877.

18. An anonymous correspondent, writing apparently from Oudh to the *Urdu Guide* (without date) says:—Great expectations were entertained from the approaching visit of the Viceroy to Lucknow, and the *tálukdárs* prepared an address which underwent much amendment, and at last was summed up in the wish that Lucknow might be made the seat of Government; but it was ordered that anything contrary to the desires of the Viceroy was not to be expressed. From the Viceroy's speech, delivered on the occasion, it would appear that no one was to meddle with the administration of the Government of India, be it ever so evil, or its effects on its subjects ever so pernicious; leading one to infer therefrom that the acts of the Government were immaculate and beyond the pale of any criticism, whilst such of its more immediate servants who might suffer were forbidden to open their mouths. Does not this prohibition of expression of opinion, which seemed to be the great aim of the Viceroy's speech, cast a blot on the liberty and good name of the Government of India, and can any love be engendered in the hearts of the subject by such acts? But though their mouths be stopped, can their minds remain clear, or is it expected that our Sovereign expects us to be attached to her Government, and accept her rule by such acts as these?

"In our opinion such expectations of the Viceroy must prove futile; he should rather have shown the greatest degree of liberal-mindedness in the matter, and permitted the *tálukdárs* to present all their objections. Now, even after all is over, the only course open to Government is to call for the opinions of the people of Oudh."

The correspondent now proceeds to describe the present temperament of all the people of the province. After listening to the Viceroy's speech, the pulse became low, the mind depressed, the limbs enfeebled; whilst the report in the bazar was that the Governor-General had snatched away the country; that Government wished to replenish its own coffers; that it was a living death for the people: the owl was to inhabit the dominions of Wájid Ali Sháh. The *tálukdárs* were bewildered, and to them the speech was as a summons from the realms of death. Some of the respectable nobles



have been heard to say that their *sanads* were in danger after the powerful speech of the Viceroy.

It is a matter much to be regretted that there is a regular split amongst the *tálukdárs*, and a likelihood of the Association breaking up; such a calamity would end in the ruin of their own individual interests. The correspondent sums up his remarks by advising the *tálukdárs* to appeal to the Secretary of State, and to put aside their groundless fears; they must not remain silent, but press the matter, as it is incumbent on the Home Government to review such proceedings.

BENGALI TRANSLATOR'S OFFICE,  
The 21st April 1877.

JOHN ROBINSON,  
Government Bengali Translator.

*List of Native Newspapers received and examined for the Week ending the 21st April 1877.*

No.	Name.	Place of publication.	Monthly, weekly, or otherwise.	Date.
1	"Rungpore Dik Prakásh"...	Kákinia Rungpore ...	Weekly ...	8th March 1877.
2	"Bhárat Sangskarak" ...	Calcutta ...	Ditto ...	9th April 1877.
3	"Hindu Ranjiká" ...	Beauleah, Rájsháhye ...	Ditto ...	11th ditto.
4	"Bishwa Suhrid" ...	Mymensingh ...	Ditto ...	11th ditto.
5	"Bhárat Mihir" ...	Ditto ...	Ditto ...	12th ditto.
6	"Amrita Bázár Patriká" ...	Calcutta ...	Ditto ...	12th ditto.
7	"Education Gazette" ...	Hooghly ...	Ditto ...	13th ditto.
8	"Pratikár" ...	Berhampore ...	Ditto ...	13th ditto.
9	"Moorshedabad Patriká" ...	Ditto ...	Ditto ...	13th ditto.
10	"Moorshedabad Pratinidhi" ...	Ditto ...	Ditto ...	13th ditto.
11	"Grámbártá Prakáshiká" ...	Comercolly ...	Ditto ...	14th ditto.
12	"Hindu Hitoishini" ...	Dacca ...	Ditto ...	14th ditto.
13	"Dacca Prakásh" ...	Ditto ...	Ditto ...	15th ditto.
14	"Howrah Hitakarí" ...	Bethar, Howrah ...	Ditto ...	15th ditto.
15	"Sádháraní" ...	Chinsurah ...	Ditto ...	15th ditto.
16	"Soma Prakásh" ...	Bhowanipore ...	Ditto ...	16th ditto.
17	"Sambád Bháskar" ...	Calcutta ...	Ditto ...	16th ditto.
18	"Sulabha Samáchár" ...	Ditto ...	Ditto ...	17th ditto.
19	"Sambád Prabhákar" ...	Ditto ...	Daily ...	7th to 16th April 1877.
20	"Samáchár Chandriká" ...	Ditto ...	Ditto ...	18th and 19th ditto.
21	"SambádPurnachandrodaya" ...	Ditto ...	Ditto ...	16th to 20th ditto.
22	"Urdu Guide" (in Urdu) ...	Ditto ...	Weekly ...	14th April 1877.
23	"Behár Bandhu" (in Hindi) ...	Bankipore, Patna ...	Ditto ...	18th ditto.
24	"Jám-Jahán-numá" (in Persian.) ...	Calcutta ...	Ditto ...	20th ditto.

Bengal Secretariat Press.



